

Received at public
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Linnton Neighborhood Association
2257 NW Raleigh Street
Portland, OR 97210



Mr. Sean Sheldrake, Project Manager
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Sixth Avenue, ECL-117
Seattle, Washington, 98101-1128
June 23, 2005

Dear Sean,

As a resident of Linnton and the Environmental Chair of the Linnton Neighborhood Association, I was initially hopeful when I heard that there would be early action to clean up the Willamette River. This was followed by shock to find out that the preferred "action" by the Port of Portland and the EPA is to build a toxic dump in the river and only 400 yards from our Historic Town of Linnton. Far from being an "isolated area", we are a town with a proud history predating that of Portland. Indeed, we were a thriving town before the highway was widened in the 50's, obliterating half our businesses. Now we are a neighborhood of several hundred homes and more than a dozen businesses that look directly at the slip you plan to transform into a 15 acre toxic dump. My own doorstep is approximately 550 yards from the site in question. The Linnton Neighborhood Association has several serious concerns with this plan:

- 1) **It destroys any hopes we have for a vibrant waterfront in Linnton.** The Portland Bureau of Planning, as a result of a recommendation by River Renaissance, convened a planning group a year ago, consisting of neighbors, businesses, industry, and other stakeholders (including the Port of Portland) in order to consider the design of a mixed-use village in Linnton. Having a toxic dump 400 yards away will essentially dash any hopes of any investor wanting to participate in the development of our town. In addition, no parents would want their children to play in the proposed park or on the beach just hundreds of yards from this toxic dump. **This is personal.** **Would you want this toxic waste dump 400 yards from your home?**
- 2) **A 15 acre toxic dump adjacent to the river makes no sense environmentally.** It is well known that even landfills on dry land will leach eventually, even if state of the art lining materials are used. Why in the world would we want one in the river? This site is a flood zone and

there are three earthquake faults in this area. What precedent are we setting in a city known for its environmental leadership?

- 3) **It makes no sense economically.** Any savings of burying the waste in the river will be more than offset by the economic disaster to the values of our homes and businesses of having a toxic waste dump 400 yards from our riverfront.
- 4) **This is “industrial sanctuary”.** During our planning process, we were told repeatedly that this whole stretch of the river is “industrial sanctuary”. This was used as an argument against developing our village. Why does it now make sense to take a 15 acre slip out of commission when our opponents have seen our 40 acre site as precious industrial land and have therefore opposed our dream of a village by the river?
- 5) **Trust in you as Environmental Leaders.** The EPA and the Port of Portland have been champions in the field of Sustainability. I personally have sat in Natural Step breakfasts and applauded your good work. EPA grants have funded amazing projects. The Port of Portland has done wonderful work, i.e., eliminating toxic chemicals and composting food waste at the airport. Creating a toxic dump in the Willamette River and calling it “cleaning up the river” will be seen by both friend and foe as a cynical move driven by money. Both the EPA and Port of Portland have publicly supported the Four System Conditions of the Natural Step, embrace the philosophy of Cradle to Cradle, and have tried to live by the Precautionary Principle. Please do not destroy our hope of a truly clean Willamette River – for all generations to come, by claiming that a toxic dump built in a slip is the best solution for our beautiful river, for our town, and for our kids. Many Linnton residents once played on our Linnton Beach, swam in the Willamette River, and played in the Linnton Park when they were children. None of this has been possible for many years. We in Linnton dream that once again there will be children swimming in a pristine Willamette River, and playing on Linnton’s unique and beautiful sandy beach and picnicking in a park that is safe, clean and accessible. Please lead the way by cleaning up the river the right way, by disposing of this waste inland. Our grandchildren and great-grandchildren and all future generations of all species deserve nothing less.

Jeanne Longley, PhD
Environmental Chair
Linnton Neighborhood Association